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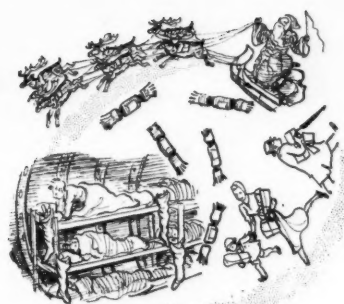
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# punch

OR  
THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CXCIX No. 5204

December 11 1940

## Charivaria

THERE is a feeling in Italy that MUSSOLINI should lead his troops in person. Perhaps he *has* done this. At any rate he's back in Rome.

Floods invading the residences of Hollywood film stars caused great hardships. In many a chromium-plated cocktail bar there was hardly a dry martini to be found.



"A main line passenger train weighs some 500 tons empty, and the weight is increased when heavily loaded."—*Derbyshire Paper*.

Don't be so technical.

Somebody has invented a steel umbrella which is a protection against shrapnel. It is hoped that they will soon be obtainable in all the best restaurants.

A square in Austria is to be named after HITLER. Not nearly so appropriate as a roundabout named after GOERING.

In an article on Berchtesgaden a writer says nobody seems to know the name of Herr HITLER's pet black dachshund. The name of his pet white elephant of course is MUSSOLINI.

Rome radio recently stated that it has been proved that Italy has no aggressive intentions against Greece. We'd noticed that.

Ambassador VON PAPEN keeps on explaining to Turkey that HITLER's only aim in the East is the Near West.

One reason that Bulgaria refused to sign up with the Axis is said to be fear of biting off more freedom than she can do with.

### Defeatism

"A foul supper on Monday night will conclude the anniversary celebration."

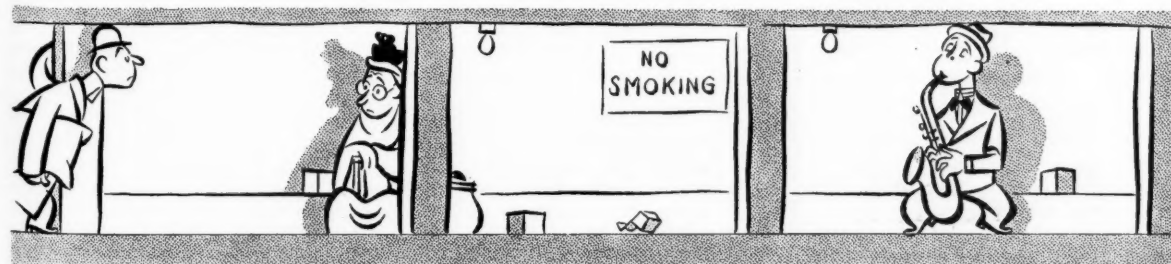
*Toronto Paper.*

"Many people are making private gramophone records to send to their friends," says the manager of a London store. So many friends won't listen to bomb stories at first hand.



Herr VON RIBBENTROP is reported to have signed six treaties and agreements in less than a week. This of course allows for breakages.

A correspondent says that when he arrived at the public shelter he usually patronizes, a man was rendering a saxophone solo. Where *can* one go?





## Wheels of War

The Expert

**G**EORGE, who is in Military Intelligence in the War Office, told us about him. "I have just had a morning with an Expert," he announced, loosening his Sam Browne and calling for a large club sherry. "Gosh!"

He was (continued George, with reminiscent awe) a Cipher Expert. One of those excessively brainy fellows—Professors of Higher Mathematics and so on in civil life. In their own line they're terrific, but in an ordinary world they're—well, rather at a loss.

This particular Expert appeared suddenly in our room this morning. You won't believe a word of this, but it's all quite true. Indeed if Spencer and I hadn't been previously warned to expect a representative from X21 at Millbank we might have put him down as a spy—except that no spy could be so eccentric. He had a vague look, sported enormous glasses, and wore his

Sam Browne buckle round on his left hip. His hair burst out all round from under his uniform cap like a dying chrysanthemum. The fact that he wore the cap with the front spring down, in the packing position, didn't help the effect.

He shut the door, began to raise his cap politely with one hand, and saluted instead with the other. Then he opened the door again, peered out, shut it and said: "They told me it was very secret." We now saw he had under his arm a locked brief-case attached to a chain, which he deposited carefully on the desk beside him as he sat down.

"I have come to bring you the new cipher code from X21. It's a double substitution with elimination of frequencies . . ." He launched into an enthusiastic spate of words, in the middle of which he suddenly put out a hand and made a sort of slow grasping

or collecting motion in the air a little distance in front of his face. We thought at first it must be a secret sign, needing a reply in kind, but when shortly he did it again we realized it was just an unconscious automatic gesture. It punctuated his subsequent conversation and was exactly like a man gathering an apple off a tree. Spencer, however, arguing the matter later, insisted that they were peaches, from the careful way he fingered them first.

We let him run down and then asked what everything was about. He picked another apple and explained that he was bringing the document in person, as it was so very secret. "Professor—I mean, Captain Chalmers was most emphatic. So I have it here with me."

He got up very suddenly and walked over to the mantelpiece. The brief-case, which we now saw was chained to his belt, hesitated a moment and then

jerked off the desk after him, together with my "Out" tray, an inkpot and several pencils. The Expert turned, said in a surprised voice: "Ah, there it is!" and picked it up, together with the "Out" tray's contents and the pencils. We spent some time rescuing the "Out" tray papers, which he was putting away absently in his pockets. Most of the pencils, beauties I'd been collecting for months, we never got. At the end he picked another apple and sat down calmly. "I have it in here," he repeated, tapping the case.

"Right! I'll take it," I said, but he only went on: "You understand that it is very secret and mustn't be lost?"

Spencer replied gravely that we had good arrangements for not losing secret things, so he could safely hand it over.

This sent him off on another tack, and after picking a couple more he told us that he had a method too. A safe in the office with a combination. "And," he added triumphantly, as if it were the crowning master-stroke of organization, "Professor Chalmers nearly always remembers the combination when I forget it."

We liked the "nearly always," but we were no nearer getting the document. "You really have it with you?" we asked, feeling it was quite probable he'd left it behind in the safe. "Of course," he said, raising his eyebrows, and as he did so, believe it or not, the spring of his cap suddenly flipped up. It was most eerie. It was as if, instead of raising his eyebrows, he had raised his whole face. It was too much for us and we burst out laughing. He actually smiled wanly. "It's always doing that," he said, taking the cap off and pressing the spring down again. "I can't get it to stay down properly."

We opened our mouths to explain and decided against it: it would be spoiling a good thing. He then got up suddenly and went to the window: we have a theory he thought it was a mirror and was going to see how his cap looked, but the brief-case took another plunge after him, this time with a bowl of paper-pins, and distracted his attention. We picked up the pins and he picked another apple. By now we had got to believe so much in this last that we could barely refrain from pointing out much riper ones—"See, on that bough there!"

"Could I have this document?" I said firmly at last, and he began to fumble in his pockets.

"Isn't it in the case?" I suggested politely.

"Ah, yes," he said, "but there's the key, you know." He produced some battered cigarettes, two slide-rules and

masses of papers, in one of which he became quite immersed till we induced him to put it away.

"Funny thing," he said at last, "I seem to have mislaid the key. The case is locked and chained to me," he pointed out. "For safety. But never mind," he added brightly, "there's always an answer to every problem." And unbuckling his belt he took it off, presented us with the brief-case, chain and belt in one, and was about to leave when in a strangled voice Spencer pointed out that we still couldn't open the thing.

"Tut! How stupid! For the moment I was thinking it was the other key—the one for the chain. I think," went on this incredible man, "I must have left the case-key behind."

"Will you phone up your Millbank office and ask them to send it round?"

"Certainly. Except"—here he picked a beauty from quite a high bough, a Cox's Orange, I believe—"I can't recollect the office number. I've got it on a slip of paper, but it's in this brief-case. For safety."

Spencer and I were now feeling like part of a Chinese puzzle—all those little boxes eternally inside one another. "The exchange will know X21's number," said Spencer patiently, reaching for the receiver.

The Expert raised his eyebrows—and cap. "If you think one can mention it over the phone," he said, struggling again with the spring. "The safe combination, I mean," he explained, "because to tell the truth I recollect now that after locking the brief-case I put the key in the safe."

I have a habit of putting everything in the safe because then I know where to find it."

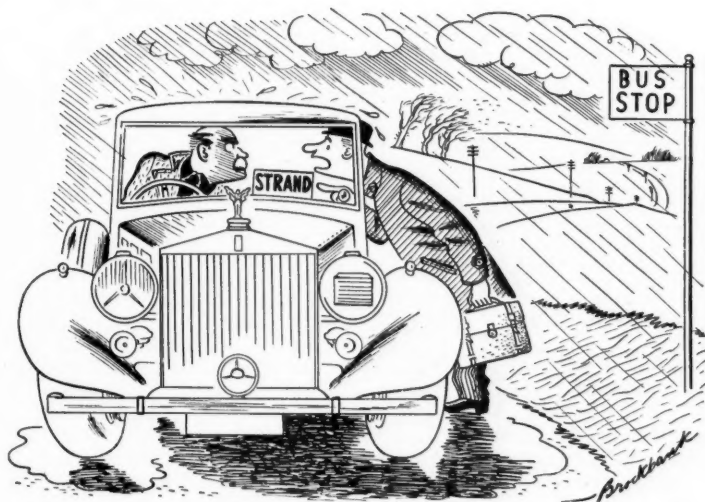
We just looked at one another. Finally I managed to speak. "Couldn't you tell Captain Chalmers to get it out? He knows the combination too."

"To be sure he does," he replied brightening. "That'll solve everything, won't it?" He selected a rosy James Grieve—we almost expected to see him munch it—and started to read the papers on my desk upside-down, leaving the whole thing to us.

Well, there was only one thing that could happen and it did. The phone went before Spencer could ask for his call, and it was Captain Chalmers asking for "Professor Mead," who might be in our office. Could Mead give him the combination of the safe, which unfortunately had slipped his memory.

Well, I know when I'm licked. I just told our Expert he'd better come again this afternoon. He looked relieved. I think even he was feeling the strain. He said good-bye and went. At the door we called him back and gave him his precious brief-case and belt, which he'd left on my desk. Not that it mattered: I bet the document wasn't in it after all. In his agitation he picked a cooker by mistake and bowed himself out with a final flip of his cap-spring. When last seen he was vaguely trying to tie the chain round his waist and was carrying the belt. Gosh . . . !

But I swear Spencer's wrong. You don't get peaches growing as thick as that on any tree . . . ! A. A.



"—Which end of the Strand?"



## Mr. Snelling Mends a Window.

GOOD morning, Mrs. Bowes. 'Ere we are, bright and hearly.

'Appen tha calls nine o'clock bright and hearly, Dick Snelling, which do account for tha size and all. Ah got oother ideas on soobject meself.

Well, tha knows, ah were working 'ard yesterday . . .

Aye. Eating 'ard more like. See tha gets job doon wi'out laking—that's all ah say. 'Oo's tha got 'idden be'ind tree?

Yon's mi noo assistant. Tooch thi cap to lady, Jeams.

Doan't tha "lady" me, Dick Snelling. Take two of ye to mend woon winder, hey?

Well, tha knows, it's like this 'ere . . .

Aye, ah know, but ah've got full day's work to do meself. And, onlike soom folk ah could mention, ah mean to do it . . .

Hey, Jeams. Yon's a cough-drop.

Aye. Didn't she slam door and all! Best get started.

Set ladder oop then, while ah tie stoof roond legs.

What's yon for, Mr. Snelling?

To stop from slipping off ladder—ah'm built that strong, see? Now thee roon oop and open winder.

. . . Ah—can't—open—it.

Fassened inside, ah reckon. Hey—Mrs. Bowes!

What's the trouble now, Gowering?

Winder's fassened inside.

Tha great gormless tup! Me with 'ands in wash-toob, and tha couldn't say owt afore! Wait there while ah go oop to bedroom . . .

Coom down, Jeams, and 'owld ladder . . . now pass rope oop . . .

Well—there's winder open. Doos tha want owt else?

Aye. Could tha tie rope-end roond bed, Mrs. Bowes?

Ah could. What's to do wi' oother end?

Ah fassen that roond me middle to 'owld all steady like—see?

It poozles me 'ow tha finds middle of yon stoomic. Well, ah'm off back to m' wash-toob afore ladder breaks . . .

Reckon ah'm fixed now, Jeams. Didst think to bring pootty?

Nay, Mr. Snelling. Ah niver give it a thowt.

There now! Ah knew there were summat. Best get it, Jeams . . .

'Oollo, Dick! Got job on?

Aye, Jack. Mending winder. Ah were joost watching yon Spitfire.

Yon's not Spitfire. Yon's bomber on trials.

'Ere 'e cooms! Hey, boot that were close to fell . . .!

Ah've got pootty, Mr. Snelling, boot it's that 'ard ah can 'ardly get knife in. Put hoil on then.

Hoil? Ah've got no hoil.

Didst not think to bring hoil? Best get it, Jeams . . .

Moost be getting tired oop there, Dick.

Nay, Jack. Ah like view of Scardale oop ladder. Woonder where yon bomber's gone? Hey, boot there's snow on fell-top, and year's hending that fasst . . .

Fasster than winder gets mended, ah reckon. Well, ah moost finish delivery. 'Ere's thy lad back again.

Ah've got hoil, Mr. Snelling.

Well, afore tha fettles pootty, get box out. Inner man require hoiling. 'Owld ladder while ah coom down . . .

Ah can 'ear Mrs. Bowes cooming.

Hey, she is and all! 'And over tea-bottle . . .

Well! Ah s'pose it'd be too mooch to 'ope job's doon?

Nay, Mrs. Bowes. Rome wasn't built in a day, tha knows.

Nay. Ah reckon it were built fasster than soom folk take to mend winder. What's the trouble?

No trouble, Mrs. Bowes. Nobbut drop of 'ot water for tea.

Loonch - time 'aff - passt ten, hey? Ah've got kettle on now, knowing thee, Dick Snelling, so take thi groob and get job doon quick after . . .

Hey, Jeams! Yon's nobbut slave-driver, ah reckon. Sweated labour. 'And over bread and bootter-ration . . .

There's 'ot water, then. What's work now? Laying foundation-stone?

Nay, Mrs. Bowes. Ah'm nobbut laying bootter on bread careful like. Moost be doon careful these daays, tha knows, like pootty on winder.

Aye. Tha doos well to mention pootty on winder, for there's nowt a bit oop there yet.

Nay, Mrs. Bowes. Woon thing at time. Soften yon pootty, Jeams, while ah tie stoof on.

So tha took all off, hey? What tha needs is wife to keep thee on mark.

Aye—or at sea, like thi 'oosbind—Nay! Ah didn't mean owt. Pass me rope from winder like good lass, and ah'll get job doon.

Ah'm cooming back when mi washing's 'oong oop, and tha'll 'ave winder mended bi then. See?

Aye, Mrs. Bowes . . . Pootty doon, Jeams? Then 'and oop glass. Hey, boot 'er nattering fair puts chap off job, she do make sooch 'ard work of it. Skilled labour and all—woon and tanner for me and a bob for thee, Jeams—what's 'aff-croon a hower to Navy? . . . Yon's reet job now. Didst think to bring paint, Jeams?

Nay, Mr. Snelling. Ah niver give it a thowt.

Eeh! Boot tha best get it afore trooble cooms out of yard yonder . . .

'Oollo, Jack! 'Ast doon delivery?

Aye, Dick. 'Ast doon winder?

Nigh enoof. Shortage of skilled labour's mi problem, boot 'ere 'e cooms . . . Reet, Jeams . . .

Now, Mr. Dick Snelling, is yon winder mended?

Aye, Mrs. Bowes. Ah'm joost cooming down.

"Joost cooming down"—and passt twelve o'clock, hey?

Aye. Time do pass that quick ah can 'ardly turn roond afore it's gone. Hey, boot morning's work do give happetite and all. . . . Coom on, Jeams. Time for dinner.

## Songs Unsung

A MURMUR in the Press—  
A moving S.O.S.

From correspondents in distress

And passionate accord—

A cry that no man hears

With inattentive ears—

Yet somehow it appears

To be ignored.

Daily, 'tis urged, we read  
Of many a noble deed  
The least of which demands the meed  
Of high and deathless song,  
But still our poets jib;  
They gnaw a sterile nib  
Though there be themes *ad lib.*;  
And that's what's wrong.

And this no doubt seems true  
To simple folk like you,  
But learn to take the broader view,  
Be slow, I beg, to scoff;  
For one, I'd gladly back  
Our bards to have a smack;  
It isn't that they're slack;  
They get put off.

Consider such a one.  
Some epic act is done,  
A theme of themes, excelled by none;  
His inmost cockles burn;  
It thrills him to the core;  
And half a dozen more  
Have wiped it out before  
He's time to turn.

A hundred bards could not  
Tackle the job, I wot,  
And that's a thing we haven't got  
(Assuming that I'm right),  
And yet I think were I  
A bard of deepest dye  
I'd have a modest shy.  
At least I might. DUM-DUM.





BRING IT TO IT.

"What about trying the buzz-saw, Mr. Bevin?"



"Last night our glorious Dorniers concentrated on the enemy's communications."

## Crosswords

I WONDER how many people have ever stopped to think what the world would be like without crossword puzzles. (Not that I hold that anyone need *stop* to think, because you can always go on with what you are doing, you know, and think at the same time.) Well, anyone who *has* has probably figured out some such answer as this: *Almost exactly the same, except now and then*. Still, you can't deny that crosswords are pretty important; look at the way they've gone on for all these years, and look at how you hardly ever see a pogo-stick nowadays.

As you know, there are a good many kinds of crossword puzzle. Right along at one extreme is the kind with an awful lot of black squares and an awful lot of alternative answers to each clue, *on purpose*; and right along at the other is the kind some people do on Sundays. Between these two extremes come two main groups of crossword puzzle: the ones with no alternative answers, but such clues as *opp. war* or

*opp. bacon*, which turn out to be *peace* or *eggs*, and the ones with clues several words long and quotations from Shakespeare and Pope.

The trouble with a crossword with clues like *opp. war* is that it has to be done alone. Several people may get together and ask the one holding the newspaper to read out the clues; then this person will ask for a pencil, and then there will be a long silence, until someone says "*hurry up*," when it turns out that the person with the newspaper has half finished the puzzle. The explanation this person will give is that it's silly to read clues out if you can answer them yourself. If badgered, this person will agree to hand the paper on to someone else, who will either do another quarter without saying a word or read right through the newspaper before handing it on to someone else. So it goes on.

But the crossword puzzle with quotations and longish clues is quite different. Here the person holding the

newspaper—X, to save me a bit of typing—reads out the clues incessantly, starting with 1 across, waiting for someone to say "Mmmm" and going on till someone else says "Wait a minute." Then someone *else*—as often as not someone who got a Higher Certificate with English as the main subject—says "Give us a quotation." So X says "When Greek blank Greek." There are cries of "Meets," "Meet," "Met," "Joined," "Join apostrophe d," "Joins" and even "Then *was* the tug of war—not *came*," till it is settled by how long the word has to be and what will fit the long word across the top, which X will have written in without telling the others. The person who got the Higher Certificate will say the quotation is all wrong anyhow, but no one else will mind. Now X reads out an anag. several words long.

Either of two things may happen next. There may be several minutes' virtual silence, giving X enough time to write in the long one down the

left-hand side and another quotation; or someone may suddenly say "Ploughshare!" Whoever has said it will then give a sort of interview to the others, explaining that it just came out of the blue and had nothing to do with brain; and, people being what they are, the others will agree, without of course saying so. Actually the sort of person who gets an anag. right away will, as probably as not, not speak for the rest of the crossword—not counting things like asking who has the scissors.

After a few more clues this sort of crossword often gets becalmed. People suddenly wake up to the fact that the same clues are coming round again and again. So someone else says "Now" and the person with the Higher Certificate says "Give us another quotation." X then surprises everyone by digging up two quotations and a number of clues no one has heard before. It takes a bit of time for everyone to calm down and for X to say "All right, I heard," to the person with the Higher Certificate who keeps saying "contumely and ears." Now the crossword is really getting on, because every word is something like "A blank blank blank E blank blank," except one, which is "A blank blank blank E blank J." When the news of this filters round and someone asks about it, it turns out that X had written Taj Mahal in somewhere right at the beginning, and although most of the letters have been *proved* wrong, X has stuck to it. Everyone is frightfully annoyed, especially the person with the Higher Certificate, who says you can't make *one* word of it. Someone else, to keep it going, says you can in this sort of crossword, and the others say not in *this* sort.

By now, though, everyone will have had a look at the crossword, and everyone will have seen that, although there are dozens of words with blanks, yet there are only four words left to be done. Having only four words left counts as being stuck. So someone will say "Well, we're stuck," and hand the crossword back to X, who may or may not finish it alone.

I ought to say something about the kind of crossword some people do on Sundays. The people who do this kind of crossword have always done it, and the people who don't never have; so, knowing one side will never convert the other, these two sides have settled down to getting along together as well as they can, or about as well as the people who do like the Marx Brothers get along with those who don't—that is, all right while they don't talk about it.

## Blitzkrieg à la Mode

ALTHOUGH it does not, I know, take long to readjust to the new war conditions that are so popular in England just now—in fact some people would say that after one night in London you got the hang of it perfectly—nevertheless, as air raids have now superseded everything in conversation, and the weather, politics, and even other people's love-affairs seem dull in comparison, it may not come amiss to give a few hints to those who like their social contacts to be *le Dornier cri*, as you might say. For such it is comforting to reflect that although the subject-matter of conversation has undoubtedly changed, the same old rules of technique remain the same. For instance, one of the most useful opening remarks at a lunch or dinner party used to be "Have you seen any good plays lately?" This remains exactly the same in theory. All you have to do is to substitute the word "bomb." The talk then proceeds on familiar lines.

"I saw Barfords yesterday. My dear, it's terrific!"

"Oh, but that's nothing to Swan Avenue. You don't mean to say you haven't seen that? You and Nigel *must* go and see it."

"We must. But last night after work he was rather keen to go and see just how bad the Birlton Hotel was after everything the papers had said, so we went there."

"It's devastating, isn't it?"

"Well, do you know, having heard so much about it I was rather disappointed. You know how it is."

"I know. Everybody told me that Chesham Square had to be seen to be believed, and, my dear, it's the most feeble thing you ever saw."

And so on. The underlying motive in both cases is snobbery. The last play, the most recent bombing: it is always pleasant to be able to say that you have seen them before your neighbour.

Country conversation is a little different, slightly reminiscent of Hunting shop and only a fraction more boring.

"Do you have many sirens in your part of the world?"

"A good many, yes. We are in the Loughborough area of course, so whenever they get the purple we get the red."

"You had that long warning on Tuesday morning, I suppose?"

"Yes, indeed. They say five incendiaries were dropped in Mallow Woods."

"I heard not Mallow Woods but in the Park at Great Mallow."

"So I heard too, but I don't believe a word of it. Doris Venables is one of my greatest friends and I'm quite sure she would have let me know if they had had them in their Park."

"I believe they had several on the school at Wyburn Green last night."

"Someone told me there's a time-bomb on Smedley Church."

"Not Smedley Church, surely? Bogley Church."

"Smedley, I was told."

"Did you hear there were ninety-six oil-bombs on High Marsh Golf Links?"

"A hundred and twenty, so Colonel Wiggett said yesterday . . ."

That sort of thing can go on for ever. But so does country conversation anyway, so what's the odds?

It seems absurd to say that invitations haven't changed, when there doesn't appear much to invite people to except cold food in a shelter or sharing a camp-bed with an evacuee. But it is perfectly true to say that the principle of invitations—which is to offer one's friends some sort of plums in the form of entertainment, cuisine or company—remains the same. It is merely that the plums have altered a bit. Thus:

"DEAR GEORGE,—Do come and dine to-morrow. We have just succeeded in getting an oil-stove, so we can have HOT FOOD; and we can also give you a bath, which I hear you haven't had for a fortnight. If the blitz is bad we can put you up for the night in a lovely box-room with no windows . . ."

Perhaps George would be lucky enough to get an invitation from the country, like this:

"DEAR GEORGE,—What about coming down this Friday? There is no moon and the weather is appalling, with a howling wind, so we ought to have a good week-end. Anyway, we have very little going on here always, and it is a reception area so must be considered quiet. You can go to bed and we won't wake you till Monday . . ."

As for other social routine letters, if this isn't reminiscent of pre-war correspondence I don't know what is:

"DARLING,—I have only just heard your news and must write a line to congratulate you both. We were all so anxious about you and I'm so glad to hear all is well and you are all right. You must be thankful it's all over. I hope you didn't have too bad a time . . ."

No, it's not what you think at all, but merely the letter I have just written to a friend who has had a time-bomb lately removed from her house.

M. D.



## At the Pictures

### LINKS

EXCEEDINGLY quiet and unassuming in the story it tells, *Our Town* (Director: SAM WOOD) is yet little short of revolutionary in its narrative method. The simple, pleasant, sometimes moving tale is presented by a narrator, Mr. Morgan, the local chemist (FRANK CRAVEN), and that sort of thing has of course been done before, though not often; the device I think is new brings this narrator out of his own part, makes him look into the eye of the camera and address the audience a second after he has spoken to someone in the story. Experiments of this kind go very well on the films, and *Our Town* is a success. The tale is a mild one of family life and young love in a small community, deliberately made typical ("Our" town), and probably not pungent enough for tastes vitiated by the strawberry jam and curry of such stuff as *North-West Mounted Police*; but you may find it equally good as an "escape." It is all very competently done. MARTHA SCOTT and WILLIAM HOLDEN are the young lovers, and FAY Bainter, THOMAS MITCHELL, BEULAH BONDI and GUY KIBBEE the parents. Among the minor players ARTHUR ALLEN is brilliantly amusing in a brief appearance as an earnest diffident professor.

As for *North-West Mounted Police* (Director: CECIL B. DE MILLE), it is two hours of highly-Technicoloured foolery, but nobody can pretend it isn't entertaining. One doesn't get bored by these calculated explosions of "hokum."

On every side here I found direct and indirect reminiscences of *Union Pacific*. ROBERT PRESTON is here as the same kind of character he played in *U.P.*, and here, as there, he gets killed; AKIM TAMIROFF and LYNNE OVERMAN are here, as there, in parts half-comic, half-macabre; the dying Mr. PRESTON the gambler in *U.P.* observed that he had "drawn the black deuce" from the "Big Dealer," and the dying Mr. TAMIROFF the hunter

and scout in this piece talks about the "Great Trapper" . . . Little things like that.

But in this instance we also have GARY COOPER and MADELEINE CARROLL; so you might also look for

reminiscences of *The General Died at Dawn*, and find them. I perceived, too, hints of various other pictures I can't at the moment recall the names of. . . . Undoubtedly reminiscent is the word, but the items recalled are all of the perennially effective kind. Nothing can stop this piece from entertaining the average person one way or another.



J.H.D.

[*Our Town*]

### ANTHROPOLOGICAL DATA

Narrator . . . . . FRANK CRAVEN  
Prof. Willett . . . . . ARTHUR ALLEN



J.H.D.

[*The Gay Mrs. Trexel*]

### THE SOUL OF THE PARTY

"Hutchie" . . . . . NIGEL BRUCE  
Irene . . . . . ROSE HOBART  
Susan . . . . . JOAN CRAWFORD  
Michael . . . . . BRUCE CABOT  
Leonora . . . . . RITA HAYWORTH

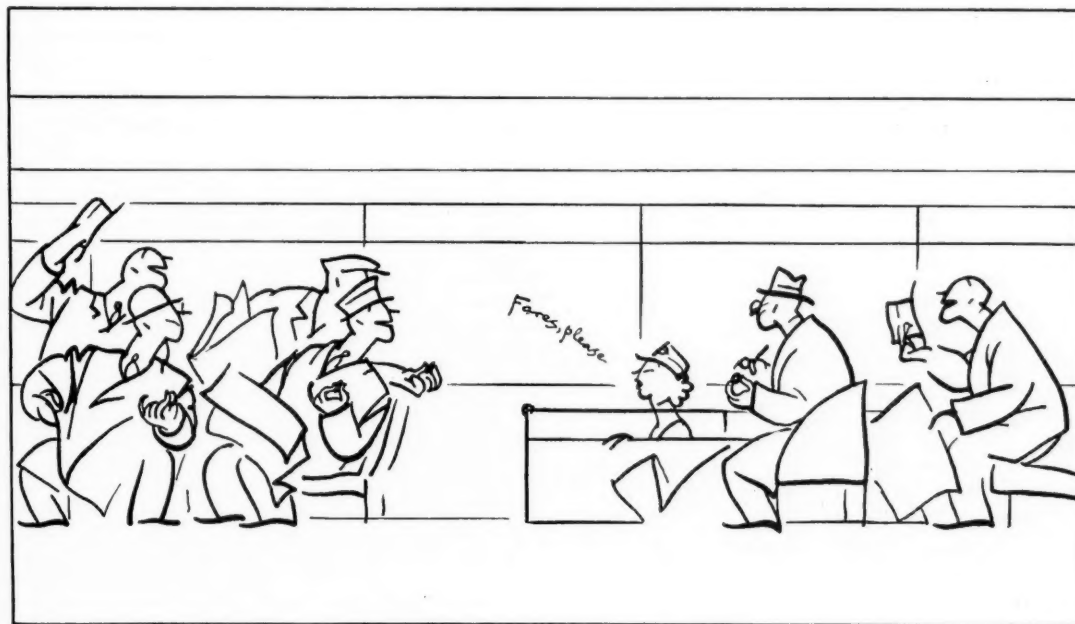
There is more reminiscence in *He Stayed for Breakfast* (Director: ALEXANDER HALE), which is *Ninotchka* inside-out with as it were a pinch of one or two of those light murder-story films with the word "Woman" in the title in which MELVYN DOUGLAS has recently been involved. Mr. DOUGLAS here is a Communist marooned in the most sumptuous surroundings in Hollywood's pre-war Paris, with LORETTA YOUNG, the dazzlingly decorative wife of a stout banker (EUGENE PALLETTE) whom he has shot in the little finger. There is a good deal of rather heavy-handed whimsicality such as one always has to endure in Hollywood Paris pictures, but the nonsense is enjoyable enough.

The surroundings are no less sumptuous (impressive, the way in which these films link up with each other) in *The Gay Mrs. Trexel* (Director: GEORGE CUKOR), a work cautiously and misleadingly rechristened possibly because under its original title, *Susan and God*, it has been banned in one of the stern Dominions—I think Australia. As always in the JOAN CRAWFORD "vehicle," here we have a number of breaking hearts in an exceedingly well-dressed and expensive setting; but I will admit, to give the new title this much credit, that there is also quite a bit of gaiety. Miss CRAWFORD as *Susan*, sudden devotee of a religious "movement" which will remind you of something, has more chance than usual to act, and succeeds very well in presenting a thoroughly exasperating character whose husband (FREDRIC MARCH) has understandably taken to drink. This film has probably lost many of the subtleties of the original play, but it retains more than most similar "smart" films and the dialogue is good. R. M.

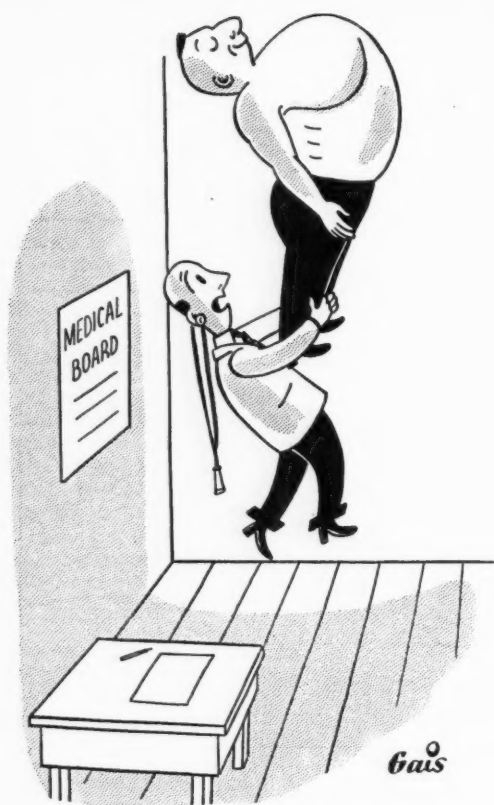
ANOTHER CHANGING FACE OF BRITAIN  
IN THE BUS



1



2



"All right, all right, ALL RIGHT, now breathe out s-l-o-w-l-y."

## Beauty Parley in Lambeth

"ERE, Pa," said Miss Tillie Pinkin, as she walked into the living-room of 61, Cosham House, Lambeth, "if you're gointer be seen you'll 'ave to spruce up a bit."

"Gointer be seen?" Mr. Pinkin said. "As someone cammerflarged me while I've bin dozin'?"

"Bein' a receptical for alco'ol don't make you a milit'ry objective," Tillie said scornfully. "Look at yer tie! As crooked as a straight talk by 'Itler."

"Wot's 'appenin'?" Mr. Pinkin inquired. "Is Gary Cooper callin' to ask if 'e can walk out wiv you reg'lar'?"

"Naow!" Tillie said. "It's the meetin'."

"Meetin'?" said Mr. Pinkin. "'Oldin' a mammoth reunion of all y'r admirers?"

"Listen," Tillie said. "I've summonsed a meetin' at six-thirty sharp p.m. It's twemmy-nine an' a bit pas' six now, so unless you want people askin' why we've looted a scarecrow you'd better smooth yerself down a bit."

"One thing I alwers like about the females of this fam'ly," said Mr. Pinkin, "is the consid'rit way they shove me over a precipice an' then tell me ter be careful. Thirty 'ole seconts warnin' you've give me; time to wash an' change an' read 'Gorn Wiv the Wind' before—"

There was a loud knock at the front door. "There!" Tillie shouted. "People arrivin', an' you lookin' like you was on'y expectin' relatives." She hurried to admit Mrs. Bella Stusser.

"Halloo!" said Mrs. Stusser. "Weller than ever you lookink! Popper and Mommer well as well?" She bustled into the living-room. "Dun't get op, Meester Pinkin," she urged. "Dun't get op."

Mr. Pinkin, who had shown no previous sign of movement, raised his body almost imperceptibly and then surrendered himself once more to the force of gravity. "'Devenin'," he said.

"Mommer out?" said Mrs. Stusser.

"In the kitching," Tillie said. "Cuttin' samwidges."

"Samwidges!" said Mrs. Stusser. "Eatink as well as meetink. Bravo!"

"Beef an' tongue," Tillie said.

"Movvelous!" said Mrs. Stusser. "Biff and tong is by me fav'rits."

"Beef an' tongue," said Mr. Pinkin *sotto voce*. "Exackly."

Miss Vera Jones and Miss Adele Brown arrived together. They bounced into the hall, volleyed themselves into the living-room, and then proceeded to lob remarks at each other over Mr. Pinkin's head. Mr. Pinkin was about to begin a search for his ear-plugs when Miss Ivy Duthbody, Miss Sally Ramble and Miss Rose Leather swirled into the room and swept Mr. Pinkin back to his chair.

Miss Tillie Pinkin called for silence, Mrs. Stusser applauded vigorously, everyone told everyone else to keep quiet, and as Mr. Pinkin observed, there was such a 'ush you could almos' 'ear a bomb drop.

"Well," Tillie said. "I dessay you wonder why I've summonsed this meetin'. Doorin' the pas' few days I bin thinkin'—"

"Wot wiv?" Mr. Pinkin inquired.

"You wouldn't know," Tillie said icily. "Now," she continued, "we've all got fellers 'oo're busy makin' things 'ot enough to cook 'Itler's goose—"

"With apple and prune stuffing is dalicious," said Mrs. Stusser dreamily.

"An' nacherally enough," Tillie went on, "we all 'ope to 'ave 'em 'ome sometime soon for a coupla days refresher course."

"Doubt if Ern'll get leave," said Miss Brown. "Life 'asn't bin the same for 'im since 'e dropped a shell on 'is sergeant's toe."

"Did it go orf?" said Miss Jones.

"No," said Miss Brown. "Ern says if only it 'ad it would've saved a lot of nasty feelin's on both sides. But 'e alwers was unlucky."

"To resoom," Tillie said. "When they get leave we nacherally want to look our chickest, because knowin' men like we do we reelize it's the box as sells the chocklits."

"An' mos' fellers find theirselves landed wiv a life-ration of 'ard-centres," said Mr. Pinkin.

"Listen, Pa!" Tillie shouted. "'Enceforth any remark of yours will be 'eard but not listened to."

"I wuz on'y observin' as marrid-life ain't all beer an' skittles," said Mr. Pinkin.

"Not f'r you, p'r'aps," Tillie said, "seem' as you don't play skittles. To re-resoom," she went on. "You start renoveratin' yerself, an' by the time you've forked out f'r a perm, a nail-do, an' cetra, you can 'ardly afford a platform-tickit. An' if you want a noo 'at too, wot then?"

"Get one on appro for a coupla days," said Miss Duthbody. "Then take it back an' say it don't suit."

Mrs. Stusser snorted. "So konist some pipples is," she said, "they should give you chenge for two heppennies three-heppence short."





"I'll give you a tip: whenever you see us chaps with our gasmasks like this, you'll know there's a warning on."

"Don't get 'uffy," said Miss Dutbody. "Lars' time I did it I bought somethin' else."

"Podden me to explode laughink!" said Mrs. Stusser. "So moeh profit I made by the hair-net I sell you I should have gengsters with tummy-guns to pertect it."

"Now, now," Tillie said, "there's no point in startin' a noo war while we've still got plenty of the old one lef'. Well," she continued, "we'll all want to spend more'n we can, so I've 'it on a plan to pervide the greates' good f'r the greates' number at inixpensive cost."

"Bet it's a raffle," Miss Leather muttered. "Sixpence a tickit, an' then you pray 'ard you don't win the ruddy thing."

"Listen!" Tillie said. "Wot precisely are our perffessional occupations? Addle Brown's lady-cashier at the S'loon de Dance, Ivy's a cook wiv 'onours in fruit-cakes, Vera's—"

"Menicurist," said Miss Jones. "Leddies end gentlemen's hends end neels."

"Quite," Tillie said. "Rosie is usherette at The Titanic, an' Sally is a wizard at 'airdressin' in all its branches."

"Cut, perm, set, dye, tint, or restore," said Miss Ramble.

"An' lastly," Tillie said, "Mrs. Stusser is the Skipparelli of Lambeth."

"Denk you!" said Mrs. Stusser. "Is true though!"

"Now," Tillie said, "s'pose Addle 'ears Ern's comin' 'ome f'r a coupla days nex' week, we put my plan inter action. In their spare time Sally gives 'er a free 'air-wave, Vera does 'er nails, Rosie gets 'er a free pass for the cinema, an' Ivy cooks 'er a cake. It's a gif'!"

"Coo!" said Miss Adele Brown, "What give you the idea?"

"When you think," Tillie said, "you can't 'elp 'avin' thoughts. An' wot's more, if we'll all suscribe a shillin' a week each Mrs. Stusser'll let us 'ave 'ats an' so on on tick, wiv a shillin' in the pound off of marked prices."

"Twanty per cent discount," said Mrs. Stusser.

"Does the meetin' approve?" Tillie inquired.

The meeting approved wholeheartedly.

"But wot's your contribution, Tillie?" said Mr. Pinkin.

"Me?" Tillie said. "I'm organizin' the 'ole issue, aren't I. Nex' thing is, you'll expec' Lord Nuffield to make all 'is own moters."

Further argument was averted by the entry of Mrs. Pinkin with the sandwiches. "Letter for you too, Tillie," she said.

"It's from Sid Puckle!" Tillie shouted as she tore it open. "Coo!" she said. "'E'll be comin' 'ome f'r a coupla days startin' Frid'y week."

"Wot sort of cake 'll I bake?" said Miss Dutbody.

"Tsimple!" said Mrs. Stusser. "Is in the Air Force, so will enjoy a nice vict'ry roll."

"Ad a letter from 'im on'y two days ago, didn't you," said Mr. Pinkin when the guests had gone.

"Sright," Tillie said.

Mr. Pinkin picked up the envelope. "Looks like it's bin opened an' stuck down agen," he said slowly. "It wouldn't be the same letter, would it?"

"An' wot if it is?" Tillie said. "'Eaven 'elps them as 'elps theirselves."

"Ar," said Mr. Pinkin, "but 'eaven 'elp them as is caught 'elpin' theirselves."

"It's strickly legal," Tillie said, "an' even if it isn't, necess'ty is the mother of invention. It don't alwers 'ave to be the mother-in-law."

## The Yellow Victory

*(The gold has been scraped off the winged Victory of Berlin lest she should reflect the moonlight. She has been painted a dull yellow.)*

STRIP her of gold, lay dullest paint upon her,  
Let her reflect no ray of heaven's light:  
So does your Victory, tarnished with dishonour,  
Aspire to be confounded in the night.





Sillence

"You were four days late yesterday."

### Lullaby

SLEEP, little Duce, sleep!  
 Somebody's coming soon.  
 Over the Alps they creep.  
 Wait for a nice bright moon.  
 Sleep, little bouncing blot,  
 Deep in your armoured train.  
 Whether it's bright or not  
 Someone will come again.  
 What do the wild wheels say?  
 What do the rails reply?  
 It used to be "Tooralay!"  
 It used to be "I-ti-ti!"  
 Corsica! Tunis! Nice!  
 The wild wheels used to say.  
 Abyssinia! Albania! Greece!  
 Is that what they say to-day?  
 Balbo! Badoglio!  
 Soddu, and Soanso!  
 Nobody seems to know  
 What's to be done and how.  
 Corsica! Tunis! Nice!

All that I ask is peace.  
 Even the Greek police  
 Tread on my Army now.  
 What do the wild wheels mutter?  
 Koritza! Koritza! Koritza!  
 Where are my guns—and butter?  
 What has become of my blitz?  
 Corsica! Tunis! Nice!  
 Koritza! Koritza! Koritza!  
 Tunica! Corsis! GREECE!  
 Koritza! Koritza! Koritza!  
 Rest, little Duce, rest.  
 But what are the English at?  
 Genoa! Rome! Trieste!  
 What if they think of *that*?  
 Nunica! Torsis! Crice!  
 Victory, land and sea!  
 But what if they act like Greece?  
 What if they jump on me?  
 And up in the Brenner Pass  
 Sits that appalling ass.

What'll the Fuehrer do?  
 If only the Duce knew!  
 Corsica! Tunis! Nice!  
 Tunica! Nicis! Corse!  
 Cornica! Tinis! Cuse!  
 Why did I back this horse?  
 Genoa! Rome! Trieste!  
 Brindisi! Florence! Rome!  
 Sicily! Rome! Milan!  
 What do the rails reply?  
 What do the wild wheels  
 say?  
 Dodecanese!  
 Dodecanese!  
 Dodecanese!  
 Dodecanese!  
 Koritza!  
 Koritza!  
 Koritza!  
 Sleep, little Duce, sleep.  
 I-tiddle-i-ti-ti! A. P. H.



SPOIL OF THE HILLS





## Mr. PUNCH'S HOSPITAL COMFORTS FUND

(Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940)

**T**HIS Fund, which was originally started in order to purchase supplies of raw material and distribute them to Voluntary Working Parties for the Hospitals, has already sent out a very large quantity of Knitting Wool, Unbleached Calico and Veltex, as well as many other materials of all varieties, to be made up into comforts for the wounded.

The number of casualties now caused by the indiscriminate bombing of London and other cities, especially in the Midlands, the South-West and on the South Coast, has made it necessary to extend the operation of our Fund to the provision of medical and surgical supplies for civilian hospitals.

At the same time the approach of winter is causing a renewed demand on behalf of all the Services—especially amongst the men whose duty lies in exposed situations—for Balaclava helmets, gloves, mittens, woollen waistcoats, and the like.

Mr. Punch, in expressing his very sincere gratitude for the generous help already given by subscribers, renews therefore his appeal both for the sake of the Fighting Services and of civilians who have suffered from the ruthless barbarity of the enemy, in the hope that plenty of supplies may be available for all, now, before the severest and coldest weather sets in.

Though we know well that these are days of great financial difficulty, we yet ask you, those who can, to send some donation, large or small, according to your means, to PUNCH HOSPITAL COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

## Impressions of Parliament

### Business Done

**Tuesday, December 3rd.**—House of Lords: Discussion on Air-Raid Work—and a Secret Session.

House of Commons: Ladies' Day—Debate on Internment (and Release) of Aliens.

**Wednesday, December 4th.**—House of Commons: Debate on the Loyal Address; Odds and Ends—mostly Odds.

**Thursday, December 5th.**—House of Commons: Debate on I.L.P. Amendment to the Loyal Address, Demanding a Peace Conference.

**Tuesday, December 3rd.**—Dr. EDITH SUMMERSKILL is fond of asking the War Minister (or any other Minister who will listen) when women are to be allowed to join the Home Guard. She is always given evasive replies.

But to-day the Lady Members have been having a field-day of their own, carrying on a guerilla warfare which would not have shamed the Amazons, let alone the Home Guard.

The mere fact that they were fighting separate battles—and indeed separate wars—did not seem to worry them any, and they carried on their



ON THE HOME FRONT  
Earl WINTERTON gives a lead.

several struggles with a grimness and determination to which no mere male could have stood up.

It was not about anything in particular. Parliamentary battles do not necessarily have to be.

The curious thing was that the ladies were not conspicuous when the sitting started, and there was nothing at all to suggest that they were about to take Parliament over as a going concern—lock, stock and barrel, with all appurtenances.

There seemed no plan of campaign. Like Topsy, the row just grew. And grow it certainly did, until the Government, all the men Members, and even the august Chair itself, were involved in one great, glorious, free-for-all mill, with lots of tumult and shouting, and even an occasional Captain to help things along.

Miss IRENE WARD, whose gift for the colourful extends far beyond mere matters of millinery into the realms of oratory, started it. Well, perhaps it was General Sir ALFRED KNOX (a man, of course) who *really* started it. It is a little difficult to say for sure.

There were some fairly acid questions about the Red Cross and British war prisoners' parcels. It was suggested that there was some inefficiency somewhere in the long, long chain that carries (or doesn't) a parcel from the relatives here to the prisoners there.

And Sir ALFRED (he likes to be known as a Diehard) asked, almost under his breath, if the person responsible was "only a girl."

Miss WARD, two seats away to his left flank, and Dr. SUMMERSKILL, two away on his right, turned a withering fire of glances on him. Lady ASTOR, opposite, gave him one glare—which was enow. Miss ELEANOR RATHBONE, in front of him, threw over her shoulder a Mills bomb of disdain.

The General lay low and said nuffin'. But the damage had been done. The Amazons were on the march. Miss WARD, like the Duke in the *Sam Small* ballad, said, "Let t' battle commence."

She dropped a pretty nifty screaming-bomb-question about members of the A.T.S. and the need for dependents' allowances for them. She got a not-too-committal reply from cautious Mr. RICHARD LAW of the War Office. Over came another bomb: Would her suggestion have consideration? Yes, said Mr. LAW. *Favourable* consideration? fired Miss WARD's machine-gun. Well, *consideration*, parried Mr. LAW.

With a commanding wave of the hand, Miss WARD brought her whole squadron into operation. If Mr. LAW would not promise *favourable* consideration she would raise a debate on the whole thing later, so there!

Then mild Mr. FRED MONTAGUE, of the Ministry of Transport, went (all unsuspecting and innocent-like) into action. He said it was a good idea for

both pedestrians and motorists to obey the Highway Code. Whereupon Lady ASTOR wanted the following clause added to the Code: "Never stop at a public-house when driving in the black-out."



BEFOGGED

Mr. HERBERT MORRISON seeks a way through the complexities of the Internment Problem.

Mr. MONTAGUE did not look as if he thought this a good idea, so a few whizzbangs from Lady ASTOR's battery came over.

Mr. ATLEE got into his usual hot water, this time because he would not agree to limit the Cabinet to Ministers without Departmental duties. Then came the grand finale, the *pièce de résistance*, the truly Hollywoodian, earth-shaking spectacle of the War of the Women.

Of all people in the world, it was mild Miss RATHBONE who took the centre of the stage, with (normally) good-tempered Captain OSBERT PEAKE, of the Home Office, doubling the parts of juvenile lead and heavy villain.

Miss RATHBONE asked why interned aliens were forbidden to write to M.P.s. Captain PEAKE (apparently forgetting that his name was not spelt "Pique") sent a real snorter of a barrage over to the third-row height held by Miss RATHBONE. He said crisply and decisively that "There was no foundation whatever" for the honourable Lady's statement.

The honourable Lady did not seem to like this. Nor did about nine-tenths of the House. They said so, in varying keys and accents all at once. Above the



*"Beware, O Cæsar! I have reason to believe that enemy activity affecting a high Personage in the State may take place in a certain part of a well-known city about the middle of one of the earlier months of the year."*

din Miss RATHBONE could at last be heard, insisting that she was right. Then Captain PEAKE said the order about not writing to M.P.s was cancelled weeks ago.

The House liked this even less, and Mr. ANEURIN BEVAN inquired, none too gently, whether Captain PEAKE had a right to make a statement "in order to mislead the House."

The SPEAKER, loading his howitzer, told Mr. BEVAN he must withdraw such a suggestion.

Lady ASTOR fired a few desultory salvos of "Noes" over, apparently in support of the Minister, while Mr. BEVAN, with an innocence that was childlike and bland, explained that he had asked a question, not made a statement. In the end he withdrew the remark, "in deference to the SPEAKER."

Then (clearly still considerably "narked") Captain PEAKE offered withdrawal of the word "whatsoever," a grudging concession to gallantry that did not go at all well, even with the Treasury Bench.

There were cries of "Oh!" but Miss RATHBONE called off the battle with

the air of a moral victor, while Captain PEAKE, not looking too pleased with his own battle honours, stared moodily at the ceiling.

Dr. SUMMERSKILL just looked at him fixedly. Lady ASTOR said inaudible things, which might have been intended for either side. Miss WARD glanced from one to the other, in a sort of watchful non-belligerency.

Then the House got down to a discussion on aliens, friendly and otherwise, interned and otherwise, undesirable and otherwise.

Mr. HERBERT MORRISON, Home Secretary, said 8,000 had been released from internment so far, 4,000 were definitely unfriendly, and another 15,000 or so could have their cases considered with a view to release.

Over in the calm sedateness of the House of Lords, Lord LISTOWEL (who sits as Lord HARE) was asking about calm and sedate things like air-raids. It seemed so quiet and peaceful after the Other Place.

Lord LISTOWEL, in the battle-dress of a lance-bombardier, very gently asked questions of Lord CROFT, who is

Under Secretary of State for War. He wanted something done to speed up the rescue of furniture and things from bombed-out homes.

Lord CROFT, with a nervous glance towards the Lower House, where the dust of battle swept and eddied still, cooingly said it would be all right soon, and Lord LISTOWEL withdrew his question. All extremely matey, the battle-dress notwithstanding.

Then (Lord ADDISON having in the meantime introduced into the pally proceedings an entirely uncalled-for note of asperity by asking his fellow Peers: "What are we for?") Lord TRENCHARD put off, by Government request, a question asking if the Government stood by its plans for the future of the Royal Air Force.

Lord SNELL, with the air of a man who had nearly forgotten something of vast importance, rounded off the proceedings by moving the customary Secret Session—a little touch of normality that moved us all. Or at any rate those who were not Noble Lords.

Wednesday, December 4th.—All these years your scribe has waited for an



authentic Irish "bull." It came, right out of the blue, from that most Irish of Irishmen, Dr. JAMES LITTLE, who represents Down.

He asked the MINISTER OF SUPPLY whether he was aware "that hundreds employed in the hosiery industry are unemployed." And nobody noticed it!

Dr. SUMMERSKILL, acting as a sort of outpost of Amazonia, lobbed a verbal grenade over on to a position held by Under Secretary for Air HAROLD BALFOUR, once an intrepid airman. Faced with this new terror, he promptly fled.

It was an inquisitive breezy sort of day. Captain ALAN GRAHAM wanted to know how many wives of a polygamous African native working for the Government got separation allowance. Mr. HALL, Under Colonial Secretary gave it up. Mr. TINKER sought to be told how he could find his train to Lancashire in a dark silent terminus. Colonel MOORE-BRABAZON, Transport Minister, said this was a new one on him. The same Minister, pressed to support a new canal scheme, regretted that most canal plans did not hold water. Major LLOYD GEORGE, for the Food Ministry, expressed the view that the best way of keeping down turkey prices was not to buy the birds. And so on.

Then the House got down to a continuation of the discussion on the national war effort begun a week earlier. Lord WINTERTON began it, with a delicately-worded criticism of the Government.

He proposed, as vital contributions to our war effort: that *hors d'œuvres* be given its literal meaning, and eliminated from the work of cooks; that fewer big cars should be used; that there should be more mention of Parliament by the B.B.C.; and (as something of an afterthought) that the Government should follow a more vigorous policy generally. He mentioned that we had been at war for "fourteen years"—but explained comfortingly that this was a slip of the tongue, for "fourteen months."

Various people had their say about various things. The debate got so interesting that the Government, in a fit of absentmindedness, omitted to have their usual Secret Session.

Sir JOHN ANDERSON, Lord President of the Council, promised that everything possible would be done in all the circumstances, and having due regard—in all the surrounding facts and representations—to all details and relevant considerations, to win the war.

Which seemed O.K. by M.P.s.

Thursday, December 5th.—Three of the Amazons very nearly found them-

selves on the same side; they were Lady ASTOR, Miss RATHBONE, and Miss CAZALET, and the subject was the employment of professional women. They formed an extremely temporary alliance to attack a hastily-retreating enemy in the form of a junior Minister. But shortly afterwards they were all merrily fighting each other again.

There followed a debate on an I.L.P. motion asking for a peace conference. Mr. MCGOVERN and Mr. CAMPBELL STEPHEN moved and seconded it and

Mr. MAXTON completed the hundred per cent. speaking membership of the party by winding up. They were three eloquent and patently sincere speeches, but as patently against the feeling of the House.

Mr. ATTLEE, Lord Privy Seal (who seemed very angry), ended the debate with a short speech of ridicule which was almost equally divided between questions from him and answers from Mr. MAXTON. And the motion was defeated by 341 to 4. A futile day.



"It's a funny thing, but somethin' always seems to shake the ship while I'm shavin' . . ."



*"Yes, of course, I listened to the news so that I could tell you when you came in.*



*Now just let me get it quite straight . . .*



*My dear, yes, it was all about some note—*



*that we've sent to them—*



*or was it them to us—*



*which would it be?*



*But it doesn't matter a bit which it was—*



*the point is the dictators are simply furious—*



*and yet there was something about them being jubilant about something.*



*However, it seems it is going to shorten the war—*



*I'm almost sure it wasn't lengthen it—*



*anyway, simply by years—*



*and years.*



*So isn't it simply splendid!*



*—or don't you think it is—*



*or what do you think?"*

[This page of drawings by Graham Laidler ("Pont") was sent to us after last week's issue, in which we recorded his untimely death, had gone to press.]

## Conducted Tour

THE ROYAL PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY'S  
CONCERT AT QUEEN'S HALL

THE Grand Tours of Mr. THOMAS COOK are now things of the past and, we hope, of the future; on a recent foggy Saturday afternoon, however, the Royal Philharmonic Society did its best to enliven our geographically static present by arranging a musical trip from the border of Wales to Persia, conducted with his customary elegance by Dr. MALCOLM SARGENT as the musical counterpart of the "Man from Cook's."

The starting point was the England of ELGAR, whose Introduction and Allegro for Strings breathes the very spirit of the West Country he loved and is free of the long-windedness which afflicts some even of his finest works. The fair prospect of his "coloured counties" was, however, somewhat marred by gusty weather and a rather murky atmosphere, so we were glad to continue our journey to the Vienna of HAYDN's "Paris" Symphony No. 86 in D; though the robust rusticity of this symphony owes more to the countryside of Lower Austria than to Vienna, and nothing but its name to Paris.

We next visited the romantic Moscow and St. Petersburg of the nineteenth century, and heard the agile fingers of Mr. MOISEWITSCH give a dazzling account of the First Pianoforte Concerto of RACHMANINOFF, that in F sharp minor, with its typical broad melodies and gossamer pianistic arabesques. This concerto, written when the composer was very young, was rewritten (as the programme reminded us) to the accompaniment of machine-gun-fire in Moscow in 1917, but, in common with most of RACHMANINOFF's works, it none the less shows clearly the influence of TSCHAIKOWSKY. RACHMANINOFF is, in fact, essentially a nineteenth-century composer.

We then journeyed to the Persia of the Thousand and One Nights, and heard the "Scheherazade" Suite of RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF in all its barbaric splendour. Never has the Sultan Schahriar raged so magnificently or so bloodthirstily as on this occasion (he demoralized his courtiers of the brass at least once), and such was his wrath that one felt that the head of Scheherazade (in the person of Mr. GEORGE STRATTON's fiddle) rested but precariously on her shoulders. True to the story, however, her persuasiveness prevailed, but not before Sultan SARGENT had with one ruthless sweep

of his scimitar eviscerated the harpist, who expired instantly in a despairing *glissando*.

As the story ended and we returned to the present we became aware that the fog had found its way into the hall, that we were far from home, and that our return thither was complicated by GOERING's idea of the proper place to deposit surplus ironmongery and the chilly lack of enthusiasm of the railway company; but it was very well worth it.

o o

### This is Too Easy.

"A silver medal for being 'the best sales talker for the year' has just been won by Miss Madeleine Robinson, organiser of the Manchester branch of the Women's Gas Council."—*Evening News*.

## Ditty of a Dormouse

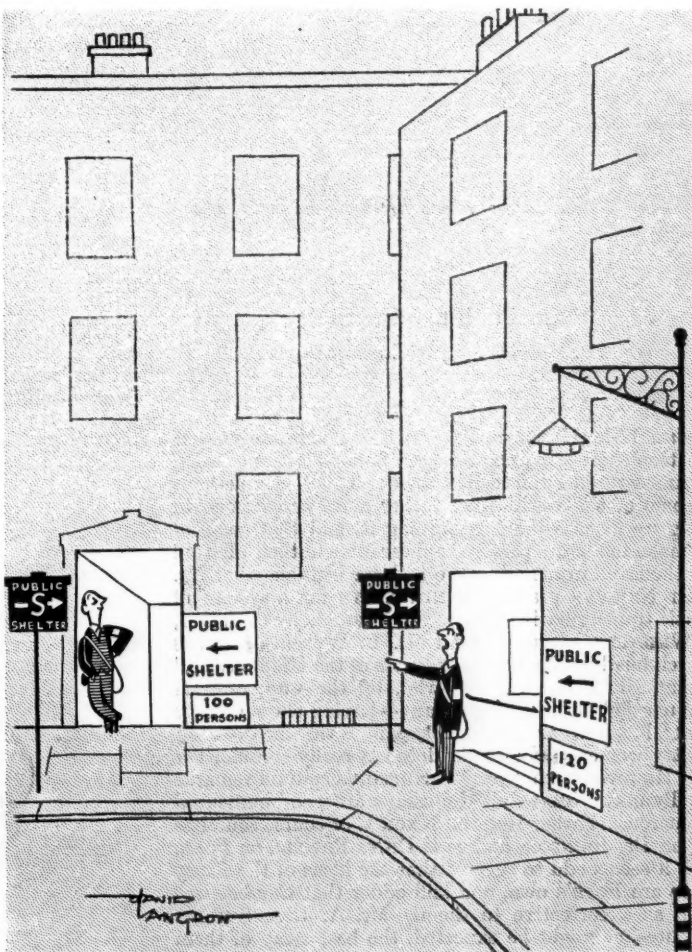
LETHE, Lethe, thanks to thee  
I don't mind where'er I be.  
I can sleep in bed or bunk,  
On a table, in a trunk;  
Coldly, in a vault or grot,  
In a cupboard where it's hot;  
Under blanket, coat or rug,  
Temp'rate atmosphere, or fug;  
Prone on platform, rail or stair,  
Slumber finds me anywhere.  
Lethe, Lethe, thanks to thee  
I don't care where'er I be. J. G.

o o

### "FLEET OFF PORT"

Heading in Daily Mail.

Well, not entirely.



"No touting to-night; O.K.?"



"And all the clothes I was left with are what I'm standing up in."

### Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

#### A College of Witcrackers

*English Wits* (HUTCHINSON, 8/6) is a handsome volume of fourteen short essays by fourteen famous critics on wits, from ALEXANDER POPE to BEERBOHM. It is a pity perhaps that some of these critics are rather more accustomed to snuffing up incense than to burning it, and that some of them make too many personal appearances in their allotted seven thousand words odd. We find, for instance, that Mr. ERNEST NEWMAN praises SYDNEY SMITH for a system of thematic transformation like that of a symphony composer, that WHISTLER suggests to Mr. D. B. WYNDHAM LEWIS "the rich bustling life of the highroads of the Middle Ages," and that Mr. JAMES AGATE—who, by the way, appears rather unscholarly in this company—having chosen MARY RUSSELL MITFORD as his subject, admits that he does not like witty women, and anyway does not really consider her a wit. However, except for Mr. HOBSON's spiteful remarks about BERNARD SHAW, all the essays are good-humoured and generous. Father RONALD KNOX is of course sound as a bell on Dr. JOHNSON, and so is DILYS POWELL on POPE, though it seems odd to suggest that the ideas of the *Essay on Man* are POPE's own, and still odder that *Candide* was written as a corrective to them. Mr. A. J. A. SYMONS contributes, as might be expected, the best essay of them all on THEODORE HOOK; Mr. GERARD HOPKINS, though he by no means does justice to MAX BEERBOHM, at least pours out a libation to Oxford and Zuleika Dobson;

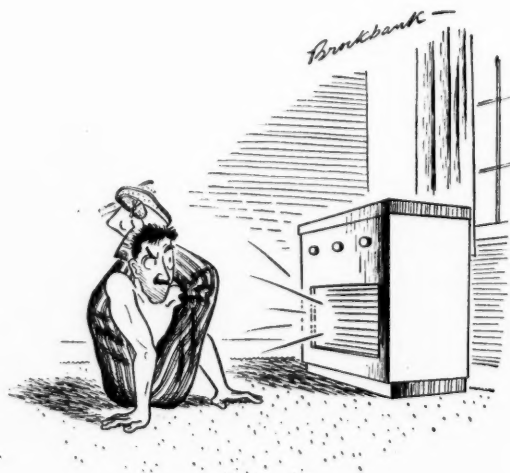
and Mr. JOHN GORE gives some reminiscences, charming, correct and sentimental, of "SAKI." This book is well worth while, but you are haunted while you read it by the unappeased ghosts of those who should have been included—CHESTERFIELD, BYRON, HOOD and W. S. GILBERT.

### The Last of Kilvert

A grave lined with bright green moss and jessamine having received all that was mortal of the Rev. FRANCIS KILVERT, aged only thirty-eight, Volume Three of *Kilvert's Diary* (CAPE, 12/6), gives the young Victorian parson's many admirers their probably last glimpse of that romantic pastoral, his life. "Villaging," in his father's Wiltshire parish and his own Herefordshire one, is its attractive staple; and the memoirs end five months before their writer's marriage in 1879 to a lady who does not figure at all in their many sentimental passages. The bridegroom died a few weeks later. Here material and meditations are as characteristic as ever. There are quarrels, over a harmonium, with the squire, who is popularly said to be "a distant man about music"; "sad, sweet trysts" in the snow of Boscombe with the fair one of the moment; appreciative notes on a Royal Academy dominated by MILLAIS and FRITH; but, above all, those minute recordings of rural effects—the "glazeworm" that turned out to be a moon-lit petal, the two girls "dressed sisterly alike in bright magenta skirts"—that ensure KILVERT his small but unassailable place near that congenial spirit DOROTHY WORDSWORTH.

### Hora Novissima

That to be herded into the present-day pen is for the poet unbearable and not to be borne, is the contention of the most sombre, the most magnificent and the most meditated of Mr. SACHEVERELL SITWELL's works. One says "works" advisedly, for here you have the makings of a classic. If human heads and hearts are "to survive this tempest" they will, he thinks, be those of hermits—solitaries whose scorn of the superfluous is their best guarantee of freedom. Poetry—most English of the arts—should condition life,



"Sorry, folks, heb heb—I'm afraid I read out that exercise all wrong."





### IF WE HAD BEEN PRUSSIANS

SCENES FROM A REVISED HISTORY OF GREAT BRITAIN. A SEQUEL TO THE SIGNING OF MAGNA CHARTA.

George Morrow, December 15th, 1915

not life poetry, and *Sacred and Profane Love* (FABER AND FABER, 15/-) be the matter of all poetry. The studies which exemplify this doctrine demand a rather different approach from that exacted by the doctrine itself. You begin, as it were, with Calvados and go on to cider. Each is distilled or pressed, however, from the same Hesperidean apples—even such diverse extracts as the sketch of a Moravian Brotherhood, of a Child Prodigy, of the Regency Strand, of a Town of Petrol Tins. The title's "Sacred" is arbitrary, for Mr. SITWELL dismisses religion in favour of creative imagination. Yet how if religion and creative imagination came to terms?

### Iron and Wine

Miss STORM JAMESON's latest book, *Cousin Honoré* (CASSELL, 8/-), was begun last winter and finished a week

before PÉTAIN's government was formed. It has, she tells us, not been altered, and now many passages are proved prophetic. *Cousin Honoré* was a wine-drinking, grape-growing owner of iron-works. In December, 1918, when Alsace had again been restored to the France of his boyhood, he was fifty-nine. We are allowed to follow his life and the human wheels within wheels of the iron-works from then until the autumn of 1939. It is difficult in a short review to give much idea of the almost perfect quality of this book (one hesitates to call it a novel because all the characters—English, French, American and German—are so alive and so strongly national). It has the excitement of a thriller, the movement of history and the poetry that belongs to clear and easy prose. But nobody can make better comment on it than Miss JAMESON herself: "In spite of the war, I have been really happy writing this book. If I never write another I shall be glad I finished this."

## Kai Lung Relates the Story of Yuen Yang and the Empty Soo-Shong Chest.

"He who can adapt himself to the needs of each new arisement possesses the qualifications not of a single person but of many," propounded Kai Lung, when, at the call of the hollow wooden duck, he deemed that he had attracted a sufficient circle. "This concerns the many-sided attributes of White Jade, who pervades the story that follows."

AS Yuen Yang bent his footsteps on a homeward path, cheered beneath the burden of the weight he carried by the truly filial thought of the sounds of gladness with which his aged parents would greet so welcome an addition to their sparsely-fed hearth, he gradually became aware of an unusual press of onlookers who thronged the Ways. At the Open Space of Malefactors, where all the more popular beheadings took place, further progress was almost barred, and there Yuen Yang set down the empty tea-chest and sought to learn the occasion.

"It is Tso Tso, the notorious opium smuggler, who is to be piecemeal-sliced here to-day," pleurably reported the one whom he addressed. "May the headsman's knife be blunt and the ceremony protracted . . . he who would cheat our noble mother city of her needful revenue!"

As the entertainment was one that involved no sort of outlay, Yuen Yang continued to stand beyond the pressure of the crowd, assured that his commanding height would enable him to miss no detail of so adequate an act of retribution. Not all were so happily placed, however, for becoming aware of a heavily-sustained breathing at his elbow, Yuen Yang looked down and found by his side a person of



*"... taking the dwarf by a convenient hold set him up in the desired position."*

deficient growth who was endeavouring by a succession of very undignified leaps into the air to learn something of the progress of the ceremony.

"O excellent and truly opportune young man," said that one when he grasped that he had engaged Yuen Yang's attention, "since you are so generously equipped by Nature, would you, for a liberal hand-count of cash, permit this distressingly-stunted individual to mount your empty crate and thereby enable him to enjoy this meritorious act of justice?"

"You are honourably welcome to the little that you ask," hospitably replied Yuen Yang, "for why should I, who have incurred no charge, seek to profit from the needs of your affliction?" With these humane words he not only thrust aside the offered price but taking the dwarf by a convenient hold set him up in the desired position.

Later, as he was preparing to leave the Open Space of Malefactors, a gracefully-restrained cough impelled him to turn. Near by, poised in a refined attitude of virtuous unconcern, one of the other sort was undoubtedly glancing in his direction.

"Since you have, by the unconcealed way in which you are regarding her presence, betrayed a not absolute state of no-concern in this quite commonplace person's trivial existence, there can be no impropriety in her admitting a passing shade of approval at the charitable action of one who is both well-moulded and alert himself, in not only placing an empty wooden case at the service of a repellent cripple but also assisting the one described to avail himself of the advantage," remarked the maiden in a voice that Yuen Yang likened to a carillon of silver bells stirred by a perfume-laden breeze in the dusk of evening. "But doubtless you are used to being greeted with frequent expressions of approval from the many similar grateful ones whom you have benefited?"

"As to that," replied Yuen Yang with some constraint, "there is a relevant saying, 'It is as profitable to expect compassion from a disturbed adder as gratitude from one to whom you have lent a bar of silver.' But rather than pass the scanty beats of time on so notable an occasion with such empty subjects as this negligible one's altogether pointless doings, tell him rather the distinguishing sign of your honourable father's house, your own harmonious name, and whether it is your agreeable custom to frequent these enchanted paths at about the same gong-stroke of congenial evenings."

From the general trend of the circumstances already related it should occasion no surprise to the discriminating members of an ordinarily intelligent circle of hearers that thereafter Yuen Yang's manner of life underwent some variation. Without actually depriving his revered parents of anything absolutely necessary to sustain their failing powers, he frequently spoke of the need for a person to safeguard the requirements of the future, of the advantages of preserving a Line intact, and the like. At the tea-packing sheds he successfully led a movement which by the mere threat of casting down their tools in unison exacted an added copper piece for the day's labour. No longer absent-mindedly, as it were, but claiming it now as an established right, he frequently picked up and carried away an empty chest, and whenever there was an event that drew together a throng in a public place (and this was seldom lacking) the Omens were ill-arranged if Yuen Yang, loitering about the outside of the mass, could not engage one in conversation who should ultimately hire his standing. On these occasions he invariably found White Jade (as she disclosed her well-fitting name to be) not too far away to be easily discovered, and each time his protestations became more specific.

"It cannot be denied that the prospect you so poetically unfold invests the immediate future with an alluring glamour in this romantic person's imagination also,"

admitted White Jade in answer to Yuen Yang's fervent challenge. "There are, however, certain complications to be faced from which it is by no means easy to see a dignified outlet. Since you are practically, as the low-class expression goes, down on the solid strata, while the tastes of the one whom you offer to support are admittedly exacting, how—"

"All that has been foreseen," replied Yang with modest pride, "and the requirement presents no difficulty. Hitherto Yuen Yang has allowed a too lethargic disposition to clog the more remunerative attributes that must surely have been, so to speak, embedded somewhere in his composition. He has now devised a scheme by which a continuous flow of silver taels will be—when once it starts—more or less unavoidable."

"O noble-stomached Yang!" exclaimed White Jade rapturously, "reveal without a single beat of time's delay this wonder-working contrivance."

"Understand then," expounded Yuen Yang, "that for a period to be counted now by moons a searching test has been devised from which it has been definitely confirmed that a persistent demand exists for empty soo-shong chests from which to obtain an uninterrupted view of public ceremonies. He who first meets this pressing need and associates his name with the supply will establish an unshakable hold on the public mind that his empty soo-shong chests are superior to all others. Henceforth, before every important wedding procession, official funeral, public torture, execution, or similar attraction, through whatever Way it is to pass, there will be freely displayed at prominent points the confidence-inspiring message: 'You require the best empty soo-shong chests: Yuen Yang possesses them.' The successful outcome can never be in doubt, and when the brilliant and variegated wedding procession of our illustrious law-giver and tax-gatherer, the exemplary Mandarin Pu You (who takes his eleventh wife when a lucky day has been predicted by the yamen foretellers), passes along the Ways and through the Open Spaces, trusted emissaries of the one who speaks will be found at every point with a practically inexhaustible supply of empty soo-shong boxes."

So immersed in the contemplation of his epoch-marking scheme had Yuen Yang become that he even failed to notice the sudden change of poise that came into White Jade's enthralled attitude at the mention of their cherished administrator's high-born name, but when she spoke the irregularity of her usually pearl-like voice recalled him.

"It is generally agreed that if there is a time for observing a maidenly restraint in speech there are occasions when it seems almost imperative to divest an unpalatable fact of any embroidered trimmings. Thus positioned, since you have unstoppered—as may be said—the subject, it becomes necessary to admit that a second complication arises now, inasmuch as she who speaks is the destined eleventh wife of that dominant official."

With these words White Jade arranged her face in an expression of resigned despair and waited for Yuen Yang to compose his reproaches.

"It is hardly to be denied that this is excessively abrupt," admitted Yuen Yang, "but none the less the sage remark of the philosopher Ho-ping in somewhat analogous circumstances holds good, that 'It is no worse to be suddenly run through the body with a sharp sword from behind than to be slowly clubbed to death with a heavy bludgeon while fully conscious.' Matters being positioned as they are, there would seem to be no actual need to disturb any of this person's elaborately-contrived plans—indeed your gracefully-bestowed patronage extended to his lines of empty soo-shong crates could not fail to enhance their lustre."

Without seeming absolutely gratified that the involvement had been so amiably flattened out, White Jade

signified an abrupt gesture of assent, but their parting on this occasion was shorter and more ceremonious than had hitherto been their usage.

Thereafter Yuen Yang applied himself assiduously to furthering his scheme, devoting all his energies and the lavish use of White Jade's decorative name to making the occasion of Pu You's wedding the threshold, as it were, to a position of becoming widely known and extremely affluent. Thus occupied, it was not entirely with a surfeit of delight that when the nuptial day was no more than a single quarter of the moon away he surprised White Jade loitering in an angle of the paths at a spot that she knew he must resort to.



"Thereafter Yuen Yang's manner of life underwent some variation."

"Prosperity: may your winning number always come up," was his formal greeting, and he shook hands with himself—but with no more warmth than politeness demanded.

"It is useless to place a pebble over the source of a mountain stream," was White Jade's ambiguous reply, but without waiting for Yang to match this analogy she proceeded to enlarge her meaning.

"In the time that has elapsed since she hastily announced her future state this one has continually analysed her innermost feelings. The prospect of losing Yuen Yang is more bitter than the flavour of thrice-distilled almonds, while the vista of an entire lifetime spent face to face with the obese and unutterable Pu You is worse than the imposition of a dragon-dream prolonged through interminable æons. In consequence she has now definitely expressed her real feelings, with a freedom from which there can be no retreat, to that gross and extortionate functionary. Suffer no apprehension that she will again fail you, faithful Yang; Pu You will bid strings of pearls, feather robes and performing apes in vain, and it only remains for the two who are here conversing affectionately together to consult the Omens for a propitious date and then settle down to a future state of unalloyed felicity."

On this occasion it was some beats of time before Yuen Yang could select appropriate words, although his expression underwent a variety of shades, and certain sounds betrayed the concentrated nature of his deeper feelings.

"Thus and thus!" he exclaimed, when the power of



coherent speech was restored, although from time to time he tore out considerable lengths of his neatly-arranged pig-tail and ground his powerful teeth aggressively together. "How, if the ceremony is to be set aside by a lesser one's irrational whim, should there be any procession at all, and therefrom what emerges in relation to this person's elaborately-laid plans and the vast store of empty soo-shong chests already stacked at every convenient point of the traversable Ways and Spaces?"

"That certainly is a detail that had hitherto escaped this usually capable person's nimble-witted mind," confessed White Jade. "But as our leading play-writer has so aptly put it, 'Out of this thistle, annoyance, we will yet extract the assuaging down of comfort.'"

"Never was it more truly written than that if every woman were to gum her hair before she spoke and wait for it to set before she embarked on what she intended saying there would be fewer cases of self-ending among the peace-loving inhabitants of our favoured Empire," continued Yuen Yang, without according any consideration at all to White Jade's helpful suggestion. "How is one who will be henceforth bankrupt to provide for the sustenance of another who has already proclaimed her inherent disregard of thrift? Indeed, setting aside any thought of his own scanty needs or even an adequate provision for the seemingly requirements of two idolised parents, it is more than likely that in the Upper Air his pale and emaciated ghost will be held in bondage by the well-fed ghosts of those to whom he has given legal undertakings of repayment here in the Beneath World."

"When we are definitely made one your merest word will be this inferior person's unwritten law, but at this beat of time it almost seems as though you are taking a trivial miscalculation too austerely," replied White Jade with a slight corrugation of her expressive eyebrows. "Lean heavily on the resource and pertinacity of her who speaks, and have no fear of the eventual happening."

"It is well said—"

"It is better left unsaid, adored, for this one must hasten back before her absence is discovered," interposed White Jade firmly. "Do not, however, think that she forgets your spoken words or will fail to profit by their instruction:

'Every important wedding procession, official funeral, public torture, execution or similar attraction—all these were equally to found our virtuous happiness.'

"That is as it was," grumbled Yang, "for is it to be thought that something really noteworthy is destined to emerge—with a date now irrevocably fixed, the empty cases hired, and a band of stalwart henchmen retained with earnest-money for their service?"

"Because you cannot see beyond a bend of the road it does not follow that there is no progression further. In any case, be well assured of this: 'To the affection of a thoroughly determined woman and the embrace of a hungry python there can be only one ending.'"

\* \* \* \* \*

Deep was the consternation throughout Ying-chou when it was learned that during the night their venerated Chief Magistrate had suddenly Passed Upwards. Even the most experienced fortune-tellers were unable to agree upon the exact cause of his end, so that it was very reasonably officially ascribed to the malignity of a Revengeful Being. An added pang was inserted when it was learned that the day chosen for his obsequies was that which, had the Destinies been more suitably arranged, would have seen his wedding rites, but this soon gave place to a general feeling of pleasurable anticipation as the reported splendour and extent of the funeral procession spread and gained volume.

Weighing his bags of metal in the security of an inner chamber when all was over, Yuen Yang repeatedly assured himself that nothing could have been more timely.

As no detail has been preserved of the after-life of either of the two personages with whom this painfully threadbare chronicle is chiefly concerned, it may be safely assumed that they enjoyed an unalloyed period of felicity together and established a prolific Line to follow them.

Subsequently it was found that there was no absolute need to provide empty soo-shong cases on which to stand, as boxes that had held other commodities were equally suitable. The revolutionary innovation of fixing wooden planks in successive rising tiers did not occur until some dynasties later.



"The splendour and extent of the funeral procession."

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